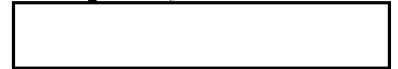


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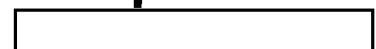


National Intelligence Bulletin

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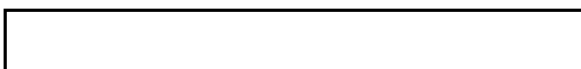
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November 25, 1975



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National Intelligence Bulletin

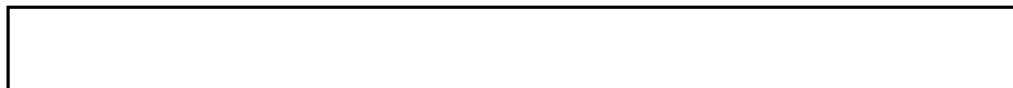
November 25, 1975

CONTENTS

LEBANON: Fighting probably prolonged	1
PORTUGAL: New commander of Lisbon military region	3
CUBA-US: Cuban interest in improved relations seems waning	4



EGYPT: Mubarak puts Egypt's support of Syria in question	12
INDIA-BANGLADESH: New Delhi increasingly concerned over events in Dacca	13
THAILAND: Chatchai arrives in Washington today	14



FOR THE RECORD	16
ANNEX: French Socialist Leader Building Platform for Presidential Election	

National Intelligence Bulletin

November 25, 1975

LEBANON

The national dialogue committee suspended its meeting yesterday after a half-hour of acrimonious debate. This will reduce further the chances for successful private talks between Christians, Muslims, and the Palestinians, and probably will prolong the fighting in Beirut.

Interior Minister Shamun, who is head of the National Liberal Party and the most powerful Christian in the cabinet, boycotted the meeting to demonstrate his anger at what the Christians consider efforts by leftist Muslims to intensify the clashes. The group's two least radical members—Raymond Edde of the predominantly Christian National Bloc, and Beirut Muslim leader Saib Salam—condemned Shamun and walked out of the meeting.

Socialist leader Jumblatt charged that it is "unreasonable" for Shamun to remain in charge of Lebanon's internal security forces when his party militia is heavily involved in the fighting. Jumblatt called on both Shamun and President Franjiyah to resign if they cannot restore civil order. The continued fighting and the reduced ability of all government bodies to function effectively, however, appear to have reinforced the determination of the Christian leaders to stay in office and to resist making political concessions.

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Approved For Release 2007/03/08 : CIA-RDP79T00975A028300010041-2

National Intelligence Bulletin

November 25, 1975

PORTUGAL

A military aid to President Costa Gomes told the press early this morning in Lisbon that Captain Vasco Lourenco, a member of the anti-Communist faction led by Foreign Minister Antunes, would replace General Otelo de Carvalho as commander of the Lisbon military region.

Armored cars from the commando regiment had taken up positions around Belem Palace only a few minutes before a Revolutionary Council meeting broke up and the removal of Carvalho was announced. The presence of the armored cars may indicate that the military leaders expected trouble to follow the decision. The armored cars were withdrawn after the decision was announced, suggesting that they may have been used as a show of force by anti-Communist officers.

President Costa Gomes, who as armed forces chief of staff had to approve the change of command, had been reluctant to move against Carvalho. A decision announced last week to replace Carvalho with Lourenco fell through when leftist military units loyal to Carvalho rejected Lourenco. Those same leftist forces may now try to organize opposition to reverse the decision, which constitutes a major setback for leftist and Communist forces. Communist-led workers yesterday held a two-hour work stoppage to show support for Carvalho; the Communist Party may now seek to use worker demonstrations to force his reinstatement and block what it will call a major shift to the right.

Carvalho may still stay on as commander of the internal security forces, even if the anti-Communist faction can make the Lourenco appointment stick. Carvalho would have no direct command of troops in that position, however, thereby accomplishing one of the principal demands of Prime Minister Azevedo's government when it suspended its activities last week. The government has also pressed for removal of army chief of staff Fabiao. Even if this or other changes are not forthcoming, Azevedo will probably agree to resume normal government functions as the price of Carvalho's ouster.

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National Intelligence Bulletin

November 25, 1975

CUBA-US

Havana's interest in improving relations with Washington seems to have diminished somewhat, but Castro reportedly still believes that reconciliation promises important benefits for Cuba.

Since late 1974 there have been various signs of Cuba's wanting to begin the process of normalizing relations with the US. The next several months, however, are unlikely to produce any major moves in that direction from Havana because:

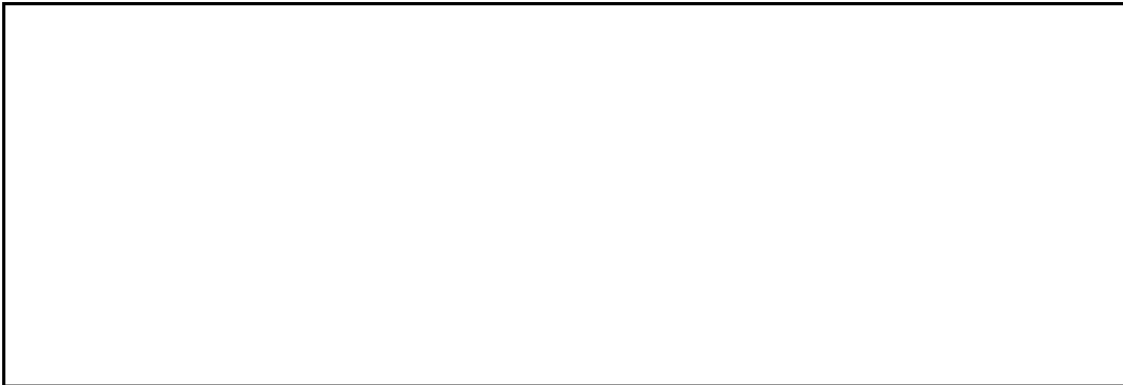
- The lifting of third-country restrictions on trade with Cuba has reduced to some extent the economic pressure to achieve reconciliation.
- Cuban intervention on behalf of the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola has brought a negative US reaction.
- Pressure from Moscow for better relations between Cuba and the US appears to have lessened.
- The Cuban Communist Party's first conference next month is expected to include heightened anti-US rhetoric.
- Panamanian President Torrijos' visit to Havana in January will doubtless elicit vocal Cuban support on the canal issue.
- The Cubans have reacted defensively to strong US statements on the Puerto Rican issue.



National Intelligence Bulletin

November 25, 1975

Despite US protests, the Cubans will continue to support Puerto Rican independence as a matter of principle, even at the risk of slowing rapprochement. Castro said as much in a speech on September 28, and several high officials have said so privately in uncompromising terms. They are apparently convinced that Cuba has more to lose from compromising its revolutionary reputation than from slowing progress toward normalizing relations with Washington.



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Much of this apparent retrenchment probably derives from a defensive reaction by Cuban leaders who feel that the US has not responded adequately to gestures from Havana aimed at improving US-Cuban relations. Cuba considers itself the aggrieved party in its disagreement with the US, and the absence of a modification of bilateral trade restrictions or a positive US invitation to begin talks may well have been interpreted in Havana to mean a lack of interest on the part of the US.



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Approved For Release 2007/03/08 : CIA-RDP79T00975A028300010041-2

National Intelligence Bulletin

November 25, 1975

EGYPT

Egyptian Vice President Mubarak strongly suggested to an interviewer in Sudan last week that Syria cannot necessarily count on Egyptian support if it initiates an attack on Israel. Mubarak apparently was trying to dissuade the Syrians from increasing military tensions on the Golan Heights before the UN mandate expires on Sunday.

This is the most direct suggestion by an Egyptian official that Cairo might stand aside in such circumstances. President Sadat and other Egyptians have always skirted the issue in the past, affirming their belief that Syria in any case would not start an attack.

Mubarak last week told a Sudan News Agency reporter in Khartoum that no state could start a war and expect automatic support from a friendly state, "because the sister or friendly state may not be ready to enter the war." He affirmed that Egypt supports Syria but said coordination is necessary before initiating warfare.

The Vice President's statements subsequently appeared in all major Egyptian papers. His remarks will reinforce the position of those critics of Egypt who have charged that Cairo turned its back on the other Arabs to get the second Sinai agreement.

National Intelligence Bulletin

November 25, 1975

INDIA-BANGLADESH

An Indian official privately told a US embassy officer in New Delhi yesterday that small groups of refugees from Bangladesh's minority Hindu community have recently crossed the border into India.

The Indian official claimed that some Hindus in Bangladesh have been harassed and that the Hindu community there is uneasy. At the same time, he stated that the cases of harassment could be isolated and that the departures "had not yet reached the proportion of an exodus." Indian spokesmen have frequently warned that a flight of Hindu refugees to India—like that of 1971—would force New Delhi to intervene.

The US embassy in New Delhi comments that this is the first Indian notice of such a refugee migration. Although we have no confirmation that Bangladesh's Hindus, who number about 10 million, have started to move into India, they are certainly concerned about the unstable security situation in Bangladesh, and some may be leaving the country.

A few Hindus reportedly were harassed in Dacca shortly after a wave of mutinies began in the armed forces over two weeks ago. There have been no such reports since then, however, and the government has been slowly reasserting its control over rebellious military units during the past week.

The censored Indian press, meanwhile, has recently taken on a more emotional and pessimistic tone in its coverage of the events in Bangladesh. The press has emphasized both the continuing instability in Bangladesh and New Delhi's concern for its official personnel and other Indian nationals there. In the last several days, two Calcutta newspapers have blamed the Dacca government for what they have labeled an "anti-Indian campaign."

New Delhi may be reacting to recent implied criticism of the Indian government by Bangladesh's deputy martial law administrators, General Zia and Commodore Khan. In calls for unity and discipline, both leaders have charged that external forces—a clear reference to India—were behind some of the country's problems. Zia and Khan could be emphasizing the Indian threat in an effort to unify the population and the armed forces, both reservoirs of anti-Indian sentiment.

National Intelligence Bulletin

November 25, 1975

THAILAND

Foreign Minister Chatchai arrives in Washington today to discuss the future of US air bases in Thailand, the disposition of aircraft flown to Thailand from Vietnam in the last days of the Vietnam war, and the status of US military and economic assistance.

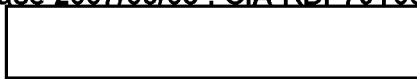


Since his appointment to the cabinet last March, Chatchai has been openly committed to a policy of accommodation with Thailand's communist neighbors. To this end he has pushed for a rapid reduction in the US military presence and the development of a more neutral Thai foreign policy. Chatchai is now moving effectively to strengthen the Foreign Ministry's influence over Thai policy toward the US—which in the past was strongly influenced by the Thai military.

Chatchai is politically ambitious and, according to the US embassy in Bangkok, hopes to gain national stature as the man who liquidated the US role in Thailand. Last spring, in the early days of Prime Minister Khukrit's administration, Chatchai was responsible for the government's policy statement calling for the withdrawal of US forces by March 1976. He was also successful in reducing the influence of the military command in dealing with the US presence in Thailand. Since then, Chatchai and his ministry have acquired an increasingly important voice regarding the closure of US bases and related issues.

As a former general officer, Chatchai has a strong background in military politics and is supported by the defense minister, who is his brother-in-law. Chatchai's hand has been further strengthened by the recent replacement of General Kriangsak, who as supreme command chief of staff was the Thai military spokesman on matters regarding the US presence. Finally, the military's reluctance to challenge a still popular civilian government has helped Chatchai.

Although Chatchai is having a significant influence on foreign policy, he is by no means free to determine it. Chatchai cannot ignore the military's misgivings about some of his efforts to improve relations with the Indochina states.



National Intelligence Bulletin

November 25, 1975

Hanoi's intransigence on the return of Vietnamese aircraft and its obvious efforts to persuade Bangkok not to cooperate with the US have probably undermined some of Chatchai's policy initiatives. Furthermore, the success of Bangkok's efforts to improve relations with China has allowed Chatchai's opponents to argue effectively that close links to Peking in large part obviate the need for extensive concessions to Hanoi.

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National Intelligence Bulletin

November 25, 1975

FOR THE RECORD

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GUATEMALA-BELIZE: A British official at the UN has advised US officials that the UK's negotiating position on Guatemala's claim to Belize will not include territorial concessions. The details of the UK's package will be explained by a British official who is scheduled to arrive in Guatemala City on Thursday. The direction the dispute over Belize takes now depends on what face-saving measures the British offer. It will be extremely difficult for President Laugerud to accept any proposal that does not hold out the prospect of Guatemala's gaining some territory from Belize.

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National Intelligence Bulletin

November 25, 1975

ANNEX

French Socialist Leader Building Platform for Presidential Election

Francois Mitterrand, the leader of the French Socialist Party and spokesman for the left alliance, will be in the US this week. His trip is designed to balance his visit last April to Moscow. Mitterrand's agenda includes a meeting with Secretary Kissinger and talks at the National Press Club and at the Council on Foreign Relations, which is sponsoring the trip.

Mitterrand has gained all of his political goals except the presidency, which he lost by only 380,000 votes to President Giscard in May 1974. Now 59, Mitterrand is in the running for France's next presidential election, scheduled for 1981.

Over the last four years, Mitterrand has brought several Socialist factions together into France's most dynamic political party. He has emerged as the spokesman of the French left and as an authoritative voice on international relations, as well as on economic and defense issues. His new stature has mellowed the man and given an added gloss to his personal appeal. Recently, he has been handled by the French press in a way usually reserved for presidents, prime ministers, and elder statesmen.

Policy Alternatives

Mitterrand has of late been concentrating on finding policy alternatives on national issues in the hope of challenging the government more effectively. He has asked his advisers to look into policy options on the economy, energy, foreign policy, NATO, and multinational companies unrestrained by the Socialists' common program with the Communists. Like Giscard and the leading Gaullist politicians, Mitterrand is a strong nationalist who favors continued efforts to ensure that, on the world stage, France is surpassed only by the US and the USSR. He speaks publicly and privately of his admiration for the US, but he has been a sharp critic of some US policies. He has also criticized the USSR. Mitterrand favors ties with both superpowers.

Mitterrand may be more willing than the Gaullists to tolerate an Atlantic orientation in French policy. He does not, however, want to delegate substantially more national sovereignty to the EC as long as it retains its present "capitalist" orientation. He neither claims nor possesses great expertise on economic affairs.

The Socialist leader has been quoted as favoring a French tie to NATO "unless an alternative is available." This presumably means he would like to pursue the possibility of collective security ties with East European states.

National Intelligence Bulletin

November 25, 1975

Election Ahead

Mitterrand is trying to get the party ready for the National Assembly election in 1978. His standing as a presidential candidate depends on the showing the left makes in that race. Recent polls have indicated that Mitterrand would win if a presidential race were held now and that the left would come close to a majority in a legislative race. Extensive gerrymandering makes it unlikely, however, that the anticipated increase in the total vote for the left, which would win the presidency for Mitterrand, would translate into a similar increase in Assembly seats.

Mitterrand's and the left's election chances rest, however, on whether the alliance can hold together. The left Radicals, junior partners in the alliance, have threatened to open a public dialogue with Giscard. The Communists, who have been publicly attacking the Socialists and Mitterrand personally for over a year, seem to be leaning toward a go-it-alone approach and may be trying to goad their allies into breaking the alliance.

A Shaky Alliance

Mitterrand himself is reported by his confidants to be pessimistic about the left alliance. He does not believe that its prospects for achieving power are good or that the Communists will ever agree to share power in a government formed under Giscard's presidency.

The French Socialist leader believes that it is the responsibility of the left in general—and of the Socialists in particular—to offer realistic policy options in preparation for the day when the voters bring the left to power with a mandate for real change. European Socialist leaders who are already governing—without relying on the Communists—regard Mitterrand as naive about communism and ideologically dogmatic.

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